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ABSTRACT

A preliminary report is given of a survey of students in teacher education programs. The surveyed students (N=729) were drawn from three strata; baccalaureate degree only; baccalaureate, masters, and 6-year; and baccaluareate, masters, 6-year, and doctorate. The demographic characteristics of students from the three strata are compared. Information is also reported on findings on their career choice and their education program activities. To synthesize the data from the survey, five brief profiles are drawn of the students in the areas of: (1) common demography; (2) traditional studenting; (3) limited horizons; (4) altruism; and (5) cultural insularity. (JD)

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1987 NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENTS IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

AACTE Research About Teacher Education Project

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Data reported herein are drawn from the following population of students:

Strata 1 (baccalaureate degree only)	N = 190
Strata 2 (baccalaureate, masters, and 6-year)	N = 223
Strata 3 (baccalaureate, masters, 6-year and doctorate)	N = 316
Total Cases:	729

A. Background Data: These questions relate to demographic information and characteristics about student background.

1. The mean age for students is 24 (24.3) with one year of difference between Strata 1 and 2 students who were under 24, and doctoral degree institutions who are over 25 years of age. Strata 1 and 2 students are slightly younger than Stratum 3, in the 1986 data as well.

2. For the entire population of students, 76.3% are female (23.7% male) with, as last year, slightly more males in baccalaureate-only institutions.

3. Of the student population, 25.2% are married, with the highest percentage of married students (29.9%) in doctoral degree-granting institutions.

4. The racial or ethnic identification of the student populations across all strata is 91.3% White, 4.3% Black, 1.5% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian or Pacific Islander and .3% American Indian or Alaskan native. Of the 725 reponses to this item, there were no Blacks reported in baccalaureate-only institutions, with twice the percentage of Blacks in masters-only institutions as compared to

doctoral degree-granting institutions. This profile is comparable to the 1986 data base, except that Hispanics have now dropped from 2.8% to 1.5%.

5. Fulltime enrollment (12 credits or more during the term polled) is the case for 90.5% of the population, with the annual cost of attendance at college (including tuition, room, board, books and incidentals) at a mean of $5635. Masters institutions are still cheaper than either baccalaureate or doctoral institutions, as was the case for 1986, with baccalaureate education most expensive ($6702). It costs $1800 less to go to a masters institution and $1200 less to go to a doctoral institution. At a rate of 4.5 years in school, the average cost could approximate $25,000.

6. Students were asked to estimate sources of financial support for their college education. Generally students responding to this question (about 85% of the population polled) report that 37% of their support comes from family sources, with students in doctoral institutions relying on this source to a slightly larger degree (43%) than at baccalaureate (30.1%) or masters (32.3%) institutions. Mean responses for the percentage of support from other sources reflect some variation across strata as well. Students rely on grants to support 11% of the cost of college, with 16% reliance in baccalaureate institutions; they rely on scholarships for about 9% of their support, with 16%, or double the amount of reliance on this source, for masters students; students use loans to subsidize 17% of the costs, with the highest reliance on loans in masters institutions (23%); workstudy provides only

modest support across all strata, at 3%, but employment accounts for 10.4% of the funds, with highest dependence on employment in doctoral institutions (13.7%). Personal savings account for 10.4% of the funds across strata. Clearly in the distribution of sources used to finance college, students appear to utilize multiple sources in putting together the funds to support college.

7. A slightly higher proportion of students live on campus this year from last, up from 53% to 58%. In descending order, slightly more students live on campus at masters institutions than at baccalaureate schools, with slightly less totally as residents on Ph.D. campuses. Slightly over half residency among the nearly all fulltime students (90%) could perhaps be accounted for by the fact that 50.4% of the entire population travels 50 or fewer miles from their family residence to campus, with 69% only 100 miles, and 93.2% of all respondents in a 500-mile radius of the campus. If 50 miles were used as the demarcation among strata, masters institutions are by far the least diverse, with only 25% of their students from beyond 50 miles, while bachelors and doctoral institutions report 52% and 50% respectively from beyond 50 miles.

8. This demography is quite comparable with the 1986 data, as is the profile of type of community in which students spent most of their youth. Across strata, 41.2% grew up in rural communities, 41.8% in suburban communities, 9.7% in urban areas, 5.8% in major urban areas. Last year's urban quotient (with urban and major urban combined) was 17.8%; this year's is 15.5%, or slightly reduced. Doctoral institutions have more combined urban students (20.7%)

than do either masters (10%) or baccalaureate institutions (13.2%), and they have less rural students (only 30.3%) as compared to baccalaureate rurals (51.6%) or MA rurals (48%).

9. About half of the student population speaks no language other than English, which is identical to last year's response. Further, the distribution of second languages spoken and the degree of fluency are stable, with 25% speaking Spanish, 15% French and 8% German (3% report speaking other languages undesignated on the survey). The percentage of students reporting second language fluency is from 2.3% in Spanish to 1.2% in German. There is little variation across strata.

In summary, the demographic characterization of the 729 students polled in this second year survey of foundations students reflects a slightly older population of students (almost 25 years old) who are largely female (76.3%; up 15% from last year), a fourth of whom are married, with a large percentage of the student population as white (91%), with no blacks in the entire baccalaureate-only institutions samples. Further, most students, nearly 70%, travel less than 100 miles from home to go to college, with 50% traveling less than 50 miles. Most students grew up in suburban or rural communities, and nearly half of the population of teacher education candidates surveyed speak no language other than English. Students pay about $5600 to attend college (up 10% from last year), are generally fulltime residential students on campuses and seek most of their financial support for college from family finances, loans and grants and their own paid employment.

B. Career Data: These questions relate to the students' decision to become a teacher.

1. Students were asked to indicate the extent to which various reasons contributed to their decision to enroll in the teacher preparation program. Their responses (at a rate of above "somewhat" to "a great deal") as compared to 1986 data were very similar except for the influence of friends which dropped even lower in 1987, as follows:

	1986	1987
Helping children grow and learn	90%	95%
Seems to be a challenging field	63%	65%
Sense of vocation and honor of teaching	52%	52%
Like working conditions	54%	52%
Inspired by favorite teachers	53%	45%
Could be admitted and would succeed	41%	44%
Could lead to career in other areas	44%	40%
Liked reputation of education on campus	22%	23%
Inspired by parents	22%	23%
Friends are majoring in education	20%	3%

The middle range response of 45% for prior elementary and secondary teachers matches responses later in the questionnaire as to who most models the teaching styles and strategies students wish to emulate, with prior teachers (20%) outdistanced by both education professors (31%) and cooperating teachers (28%).

2. When asked their present feeling about teaching as a career, 91% (up from 85% last year) are "positive" to "very positive" in

response across all strata and 87% intend to go into teaching after graduation, which is about the same as the 1986 response. There was slightly more positive response on this item from BA and MA institutions than doctoral institutions, with about a 5-7% difference from Stratum 3 as compared to Stratas 1 and 2. Of the 13.3% who do not plan to go directly into teaching after graduation, 66% (up from 57% last year) plan to go into a field related to education or go to graduate school, coming largely from the Stratas of 2 and 3. Those who plan to teach plan careers of longevity, with 63% planning to stay more than five years. Those who expect to drop out of teaching in five years or less cluster more in the doctoral degree institutions.

3. A subsequent question asked students what impact the teacher preparation program has had on the attitude toward teaching, compared to when they started the program, reporting that their attitude is now more positive at 65%, and about the same at 25%, supporting the generally postive responses reported in other items. Results were similar from 1986 to 1987 in response to the adequacy of a teacher's salary to support a single person versus a teacher with a family. Sixty percent said the salary was "adequate" and 27% "more than adequate" for a single person (up 2% for each question from last year) but 92% said the salary was less than adequate to support a family. There exists more discomfort regarding adequacy of salary level among students in doctoral institutions than in other strata.

4. Student preferences for job placement have shifted a bit since last year when most students (54%) wanted to go to suburbia to teach, but this year only 42% preference this type of community. In contrast, interest in rural areas has increased to 42%, up from 27% last year. Unfortunately, interest in urban areas, already at a very low level, decreased from 15% to 9%, with only 16% total wanting to go to urban or major urban areas as opposed to 19% last year.

5. Students are interested in taking teaching positions largely within their home state. Up from last year, 58% (last year 53%) of the respondents would not go anywhere nationally for a teaching position, but nearly 80% and above would go within 50 miles of home or their graduating institution, or even in their hometown for a teaching position. On these variables, BA graduates appear to have slightly more mobility than others, while Ph.D. institution students are most interested in going back home to teach. Eighty-three percent of the respondents would agree to look elsewhere in the state and 73% in the region for a teaching job.

6. Students were asked to indicate the types of students, educational settings, and socio-economic status they would prefer for first teaching assignments. The profile of priorities is very similar to the 1986 responses. Against the responses of "would teach" or "would prefer to teach", the rank order of types of students was as follows: average ability students, 80%; gifted/talented students, 60%; low ability students, 42%; learning disabled students, 27%; physically handicapped students, 25%; emotionally disturbed

students, 17%; and mentally handicapped students, 15%. If we review absolute preferences not to teach a certain population of students, 58% and 52% would not consider mentally handicapped or emotionally disturbed students respectively. Students, as last year, have no particular preference between culturally diverse or homogeneous settings, but as we are reminded, depending on where they fall geographically (see item #5 above). Students were also asked how adequately they believe they are being prepared as entry-level teachers to teach a culturally-diverse setting with at-risk students, with 71% responding "adequacy" or "above adequacy." Students' preferences for traditional classrooms (79%) exceed interest in experimental classrooms (49%). Finally, students would go and/or strongly prefer middle-income settings (80%) to either high-income settings (61%) or low-income settings (40%).

In summary, the career preferences of the foundations students in responding to this survey suggest a considerable degree of interest in serving in the social service of teaching wherein students report motivations toward the profession as an interest in helping children grown and learn, followed by the challenge of the field, and the sense of vocation and honor of teaching. Rather surprisingly, over 50% of the population was 'somewhat' or 'a great deal' influenced by the compatible working conditions of teaching. Students are extremely positive about their feelings toward teaching as a career, and 87% of them intend to go into teaching directly after graduation and more than 63% of the students expect to stay in teaching five years or more. They feel that a teacher's salary is adequate

for supporting an individual (although not a family) and like their own community roots, they wish to return to suburban and rural areas to teach, with less than 16% of the population interested in urban or major urban locales to teach, down 4% from last year. They are also hesitant to travel anywhere nationally to take a teaching position. They prefer to teach average ability students at a slightly higher rate than gifted and talented, and their preferences for handicapped or learning disabled students is quite low. They do not indicate much of a preference between culturally diverse or homogeneous classrooms. Finally, over 80% of the population prefer middle income settings as opposed to a high income or low income settings.

C. Program Data:

1. Sixty-three percent of all students entered initially the institution they are now attending, with a slightly higher rate of first entry in the baccalaureate-only institutions. Of those who did transfer in (37%), they carried with them 76 quarter hours/53 semester hours. Also, transfer students came from a state institution in 36% of the cases, from a community college in 35% of the cases, a two-year branch or extension campus in 6% of the cases, and a private institution in 21% of the instances.
2. Most students returning the questionnaire had completed 116 quarter hours or 76 semester hours, making their rank at early to mid juniors. Their cumulative grade point average is 3.04, or at the B level, down from last year's report of 3.38.
3. Students report that they spend an average of 17 hours per week on out-of-class activities related to school work for the program as a

whole, 6 clock-hours for the foundations course surveyed per week, and 11 hours per week in paid employment (down somewhat from last year's 17-hour paid work week). More students work for paid employment in masters institutions, spend more out-of-class worktime on the total program in BA institutions, and spend more time on the course polled in masters institutions.

4. Last year we asked a series of questions about student acquaintances in college, their contacts with faculty and various socio-cultural peer interactions. Two questions this year relate to this same perspective. First, with regard to faculty access, last year students reported that faculty were often or nearly-always available 79% of the time, with variation from BA (83%) to M.A. (81%) to Ph.D. institutions (74%). Approximately the same distribution is reflected this year of 85%, 78%, and 71% respectively. Second, questions asked last year measured the degree of student interactions on campus with diverse socio-cultural groups, wherein students reported interaction with diverse populations at 65% to 70% and like acquaintances at 83%. This year our question related to diverse socio-cultural interaction as a prerequisite for course understandings in the foundations courses. Here students report the inadequacies of these interactions in preparation for course content, with 54% with little or no contribution, 32% at moderate contribution, and 15% at high contribution.

In summary, the data recorded in this section of the questionnaire with regard to program information suggests that well over half of the students

enter the institution in which they ultimately matriculate. Of those who transfer, they bring approximately a year and a half or more of credit with them, and they come mostly from community colleges, extension colleges or state institutions. The degree of effort expended on school work is around 17 hours a week, with the amount of time students spend in paid employment, down from last year's report of 17 hours to 11 hours. Regardless, students are able to maintain a B or 3.04 grade point average. Students report more faculty access in B.A. than Ph.D. institutions by 10%, but yet all degrees of access seem high (around 80%). Although we did not ask students to specify the nature of their peer interactions this year (as in last year's survey, to test degrees of exposure to cultural and/or ethnic diversity), students report that the diversity of their socio-cultural intervention, at a more general level, rarely prepared them to address these same issues in their foundations courses.

Concluding Observations

In an effort to synthesize the data drawn from three of four question areas on the student survey (background data, career data, and program data), five profiles can be drawn of the students from foundations courses surveyed in this study. These profiles are as follows: Common Demography, Traditional Studenting, Limited Horizons, Altruism and Cultural Insularity.

Common Demography. The attributes the students in this study carry suggest a portrait of the average preservice student as typically white and female, from a rural (small town) or suburban home community, matriculating in a school, college or department of education whose tuition is in the $5500 range, paid for by family savings, loans and

work, who travel less than 100 miles away from home to go to college. This profile reiterates a profile of the average college student drawn last year in the RITE study and confirms an analysis of recruitment and selection issues in Howey, K., Matthes, W. and Zimpher, N. (1985), wherein the teaching population was reported in 1984 as 91% White, 6% Black, and 1.7% Hispanic, and as well largely female, and from a modest family background.

Traditional Studenting. The profile of the students, beyond the common demography referenced above, suggests a student who has selected an institution not only close to home, but not particularly based on the institution's reputation, or peer influence, but perhaps more plainly stated, "because it's there." Students matriculate in these easily accessible programs (programs they thought they could most likely be admitted to) at a fairly normal rate in that student respondents to our questionnaire had accrued the average number of credits for matriculating end of the year juniors, and in 80% of the cases plan to take a teaching position. The students reported slightly less than 20 hours of school work a week and carried over half that same amount of paid employment. Students manage to carry a fairly dignified B average in their teacher education program. The studies synthesized by Howey et al., (1985) do run somewhat counter to this profile in that they cite studies wherein 30 to 40% of those prepared to teach do not do so. This population of teacher candidates suggests a higher retention in the profession as well in that 63% of them expect to stay. In comparison with the Pace analysis of students in teaching beyond 5 years, as opposed to the 50% dropout reported elsewhere (Schlecty, 1983).

Limited Horizons. The career view of these students appears to be somewhat limited. Most students plan to stay very close to their home institutions or their home town and certainly within the state for their first teaching position. When asked if students would venture into the region or anywhere nationally, there was little interest in such a placement. Students also wished to teach average ability students or perhaps gifted students, but certainly there was little interest in special education instruction. As well, students preferred to teach middle-income students with no particular persuasion toward cultural diversity, although they did not oppose placement in this area. These data are confirmed by Haberman (1983) wherein in contrast to the multiethnic/multiracial population of most large cities projected for the year 2000, only one out of every three teacher candidates want to teach in these sites.

Altruism. The profile drawn from our data is that these students are very eager to enter the teaching profession, with a particular eye toward having selected this career as one which would allow them to help children grown and learn, would engage them in a field which they view as challenging, and would allow them to work in a situation which they consider to be a positive environment. They also acknowledge that the salary which a teacher receives is adequate to support a single person but not a family. These results counter many reports of the negative effect of the disincentives of schooling in our ability to recruit academically able teachers into the profession. Rather than being moderate about the condition of teaching, our candidates seem very positive about what they view as the situation of teaching. Mostly this

altruistic view of the teaching career is validated in recent case studies completed by Howey and Zimpher (in press) in the midwest region (supported by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory), wherein students reported a considerable amount of enthusiasm about their future role as teachers, often described their choice to become teachers against the same variables as this 1987 student population (that is, an interest in helping children grown and learn), and were eager to take their first teaching position. Among the population polled in this survey, almmost 90% say they plan to take teaching positions.

Cultural Insularity. The profile of our student population as previously noted is largely White, with less than 5% Blacks and less than 2% Hispanics in the population. Already we have acknowledged that this is not the profile of the major metropolitan school districts which must be served by this future teacher candidate population. Beyond this, these students mostly want to return to the community setting where they grew up, which is largely small town and rural. They are not eager to cross state lines, to exit from their geographic region or to travel nationally for a teaching position. Only 50% of the student population reports knowledge of a second language. The fluency in all instances is very low for those who do speak a second language. Again, this does not bode well for staffing the multiracial and probably multilingual major metropolitan sites where teacher shortages will exist in the near future, and in many cases already do. This cultural insularity may be aggrevated as well by limited opportunities in the university setting to explore cultural diversity. This perspective is

validated somewhat in recent case studies (Howey and Zimpher, in press), where some colleges and universities visited encouraged students to assume local placements in like communities the states where these institutions existed and do little to provide for more experiences in cultural diversity in the course of the teacher education program.